



Australasian **Housing** Institute

Linking social housing workers in Australia and New Zealand

Supporting **Our** Profession

Business Plan 2006 – 2009

Contents

Executive Summary.....	5
Purpose.....	6
Vision and Values.....	6
Objectives.....	7
The Social Housing Industry in Australasia.....	8
Our Company.....	9
Our business environment.....	10
The Products and Services.....	12
The Strategies.....	13
Past and present performance.....	16
Financials.....	18
Appendix 1: The Year in Review.....	20
Appendix 2: Risk Management.....	21
Appendix 3: The Board of Directors.....	22

Executive Summary

The Australasian Housing Institute is the professional association of people working and volunteering in the multi-disciplinary social housing industry. Our purpose is to support social housing professionals achieve excellence in social housing through the development and promotion of a skilled and professional sector that works towards achieving the best possible outcomes for clients and local communities, and for organisations.

The Institute draws its strength from the strong commitment made by social housing professionals to join the organisation as members. Members contribute to the Institute's activities at the local, national and international level and use our products and services. We add value to a multi disciplinary social housing system by: drawing the different strands of the profession together; defining a clear standard of professional practice; creating new opportunities for professional development and mentoring; and providing members with an independent avenue to influence the direction of social housing (and related) policy and practice.

Members appoint the Board of Directors at the Annual General Meeting each year. All Directors are members of the Institute. Membership of the Board changes marginally each year: refreshed by new members and stabilised by the continued involvement of experienced Directors. Directors lead strategy development through the Board's four sub committees: Policy; Education and Practice; Member Services; and Finance and Risk Management. Members are invited to join these Committees to assist the Board of Directors obtain a broad membership view on key matters.

The Chief Executive Officer, who is a member of the Institute with more than twenty years experience in social housing in a variety of executive and practitioner roles, leads a small team of two other people to deliver the organisation's programs. We operate a staff network, rather than a fixed office. One member of staff is located in Brisbane and two work from our registered office in rural southern New South Wales. We also regularly use the services of contractors based in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne.

The Australasian Housing Institute works with a wide range of organisations within Australasia to further our objectives and deliver value to members. We particularly value our strong working relationship with the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute and Swinburne University of Technology. The Chartered Institute of Housing in the United Kingdom is a significant mentor and partner to our organisation. This business relationship is built around the notion that whilst social housing is very different in other countries, some of the challenges are similar and we can learn from one another.

We are clear that the organisation needs financial support to meet the expectations of members and other stakeholders. Registration fees for professional development products will cover costs, but will not make sufficient profit to subsidise other areas of activity such as publications, networking, professional standards and governance. Membership is growing slowly and steadily, but would need to be six times the current level for the organisation to finance its activities from this source. In 2006 we will introduce a corporate supporter program for housing organisations and seek sponsorship from the private sector for events and activities.

The Board of Directors is now very optimistic about the future of the Institute. People attending our seminars, workshops and conferences consistently rate the events very highly and tell us that these sessions are some of the most valuable professional

development activities they have experienced. Our Journal HousingWORKS is very well received with the main request from readers being that we should produce more editions each year, which we intend to do in 2007. Social housing professionals are seeing the benefits of supporting an Institute first hand, whether those benefits are professional development, a stronger sense of being part of a valued and skilled profession or the simple financial benefits obtained from the member benefits program.

Purpose

The Australasian Housing Institute is the professional association of people working and volunteering in the multi-disciplinary social housing industry. Our purpose is to support social housing professionals achieve excellence in social housing through the development and promotion of a skilled and professional sector that works towards achieving the best possible outcomes for clients and local communities, and for organisations.

Vision and Values

Our vision is: The Australasian Housing Institute is a progressive, dynamic, respected organisation, whose members, and the rest of the social housing profession, are justifiably proud of its achievements. The organisation is influential within social housing and related fields and provides authoritative policy and practice advice to policy and practice leaders. Membership of the AHI enhances professional recognition and standing for people working and volunteering in the social housing industry and is supported by a qualifications framework. The organisation is financially secure.

As an organisation we value

- Members - the driving force behind the vision, objectives and strategies of the organisation
- Corporate supporters - our colleagues in supporting a vibrant and self confident social housing profession
- Business partners - the help we need to deliver the products and services our stakeholders want.
- Customers - the people whose feedback drives future development of products and services.
- Ethical and professional behaviours - the visible expression of attitudes and values such as mutual respect, continuous learning, collegiate working, recognition of the contribution of others, commitment to the principles of social justice and pride in our sector and the people we assist.

Objectives

1. Provide social housing professionals with the opportunity to belong to a professional association and make connections with colleagues in the industry
2. Recognise professional standing against a set of defined standards and accredit courses which assist housing workers achieve those standards
3. Provide members with a voice in the public conversation about social housing and be influential in the social housing policy environment
4. Support the building and sharing of housing practice skills, ideas and approaches
5. Inform members about topical policy and practice issues

The Social Housing Industry in Australasia

This is a time of radical change for the social housing profession in Australasia. System reform, organisation change, increased pressure on resources and a shifting customer dynamic are demanding new ways of working and reshaping what it means to be a social housing professional.

The role of public housing authorities is changing: with a renewed emphasis on affordable and community housing models; a greater concentration on engaging with the private sector to maintain and expand business opportunities; a sharper focus on the role of social housing as part of broader social and community objectives; and an ever more targeted approach to the allocation of social housing. Within Australasia, and internationally, people working and volunteering have much in common, whilst developing solutions to suit their particular environments with the resources they have available.

The social housing workforce is multi disciplinary in nature, with some members of the profession able to access another professional associations linked to their particular discipline. The Australasian Housing Institute links all the disciplines which make up social housing and adds value as the only body of this kind in Australasia doing so. Internationally, we work closely with the Chartered Institute of Housing in the United Kingdom, an organisation with similar aims and objectives to our own.

The policy and practice of social housing is supported by research principally conducted through the auspices of the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute in Australia and the Centre for Housing Research in New Zealand. There are a range of education and training providers who support the industry. The main provider of higher education services is Swinburne University of Technology in Victoria.

Our Company

The Australasian Housing Institute is a registered company under the Corporations Act 2001, Australia. The company is limited by guarantee and is a public company. Our main activities are professional development services, publications, member services and facilitating policy debate. Our registered office is in New South Wales, with staff located in Queensland and New South Wales. We provide our services to members and other customers in New Zealand and all states and territories of Australia.

Members appoint the Board of Directors at the Annual General Meeting each year. All Directors are members of the Institute. Membership of the Board changes marginally each year: refreshed by new members and stabilised by the continued involvement of experienced Directors. Directors lead strategy development through the Board's four sub committees: Policy; Education and Practice; Member Services; and Finance and Risk Management. Members are invited to join these Committees to assist the Board of Directors obtain a broad membership view on key matters.

The organisation is led by Chief Executive Officer, who is a member of the Institute with more than twenty years experience in social housing in a variety of executive and practitioner roles. The CEO is supported by a Professional Development Co-ordinator and an Office Assistant. A fourth position of Member Services Co-ordinator will be filled as funds become available.

Our key business relationships are with members, social housing employers, housing authorities, social housing workers, education and training institutions and professionals and other professional associations. The key overseas business relationship is with the Chartered Institute of Housing in the United Kingdom.

The Institute draws its strength from the strong commitment made by social housing professionals to join the organisation as members. Members contribute to the Institute's activities at the local, national and international level and use our products and services. We add value to a multi disciplinary social housing system by: drawing the different strands of the profession together; defining a clear standard of professional practice; creating new opportunities for professional development and mentoring; and providing members with an independent avenue to influence the direction of social housing (and related) policy and practice. Building on our collective expertise in social housing practice and critical policy issues, we intend to lead the change processes that will further industry knowledge about service provision to clients with complex needs and strengthen our housing responses for this group.

Our business environment

Customers

Our customers tell us that the products and services we deliver are worthwhile. Our seminars and conferences regularly average satisfaction scores of 4 out of 5. However, our customers are also telling us that they want us to do more. They want to see more editions of the Journal HousingWORKS and they want to see more content. Customers also want more workshops on hot topics and more opportunities to network with colleagues around particular aspects of practice. Most importantly, our members tell us they want to have more opportunities to influence the development and implementation of social housing policy. Our members have also told us that we must modernise and improve the way we do business electronically.

Partners

Employers are partners in building a vibrant and self confident profession. The Institute integrates the priorities, aspirations and needs of employers with the needs of members and customers to develop the professional development program.

Other industry bodies within Australasia, such as community housing and social welfare peak organisations, are also partners in shaping the social housing profession. There is potential to form significant business partnerships with some of these organisations.

Education and training providers also shape the profession through the social housing and related courses they offer. The Institute will seek to accredit these courses and encourage the education and training providers to deliver courses which best meet the needs and aspirations of the profession.

The Chartered Institute of Housing in the United Kingdom is a significant mentor and partner to our organisation. This business relationship is built around the notion that whilst social housing is very different in other countries, many of the challenges are similar and we can learn from one another.

Our strengths and business opportunities

The Institute's members have an unrivalled depth and breadth of policy and practice expertise and are active in shaping the work and outcomes delivered by the organisation. The people leading and managing the organisation have high level expertise in social housing and professional development. We are a modern, entrepreneurial, focused and expertise based organisation.

The social housing industry is going through a long transition from a system solidly rooted in the provision of rental housing to working people by large government authorities, to a system whereby rental housing and home ownership options are provided by a range of government and non government organisations to clients determined to be those in the greatest need. The Institute's business opportunities come through our capacity to identify emerging trends and needs within the profession. From this understanding we can build a product and service range which supports social housing professionals both improve their professional practice and maximize their career opportunities. The growing emphasis on providing housing for those in the greatest need, combined with the desire of social housing professionals to improve their knowledge and skills in this area and the relatively limited resources available for

people working in a specifically housing context, provides the most significant business opportunity for the Institute.

Threats and weaknesses

The two most significant threats to our organisation are: firstly, the slow development of an understanding about the role for a professional association in an industry that is multi disciplinary and has only relatively recently begun to recognise the need for social housing specific education, training and professional development; and secondly, the very high expectations of what the organisation can achieve with a very small budget.

The Institute is an organisation that is open and honest about its weaknesses. We incorporate feedback into our business strategy and product development. We are recovering from a long period of not measuring up to the expectations of members and funders. We are demonstrating that the organisation is now delivering what it promises, but it will take more time to substantiate our claims. We need to upgrade our business systems, particularly our membership and events software, as they no longer meet our business needs.

The Products and Services

Regulation of social housing practice

Our role is to develop standards of professional practice, accredit suitable courses offered by education and training institutions and recognise individuals who demonstrate that they are achieving the standards.

Professional Development

We aim to support social housing workers and volunteers enhance their professional practice, maintain their motivation to contribute fully to professional life and achieve personal career goals. Our professional development seminars enable participants to learn about the ideas and experience of others, exchange information about policy and practice issues and make connections with people with a shared interest. The professional practice workshops provide an opportunity for participants to learn from the experience of others to build skills and knowledge that will assist them implement workable solutions to the daily issues they face as social housing practitioners.

Publications

HousingWORKS is the Institute's highly regarded bi-annual journal. It is the only publication of its kind in Australasia, informing readers about topical issues and generating debate about emerging issues. Housing People is the vibrant monthly member E-Magazine, which showcases the work and interests of AHI members and helps members communicate with each other and with the Board and staff of the organisation

Professional Practice Networks

People working in similar social housing specializations, such as asset management, community renewal and education and training, are keen to come together to share ideas and solutions in a professional practice setting. Our experience shows that these networks work best when formally and fully facilitated by the AHI.

Member networks

Branch Committees are instrumental in bringing together social housing professionals from the diverse parts of the sector in each jurisdiction. Branch Committees involve volunteers, people from public and community housing, consultants and people working in private sector organisations.

Conferences

The Institute offers two types of conferences: practice conferences which focus on a specific aspect of social housing activity; and local conferences with a focus on local social housing issues. We also intend to run the 2009 National Housing Conference with AHURI.

Practice Resource Centre

The Practice Resource Centre will do two things: assist social housing professionals find out about others who are active in their area of interest and who are willing to share their expertise on a one to one basis; and secondly, provide up to date material on key practice issues.

The Strategies

- 1. Grow membership of the Institute to a number equivalent to 20% of those employed in public housing authorities by 2009**
 - Assess member, customer and stakeholder satisfaction by way of a rolling and personalised evaluation program
 - Market the benefits of membership to social housing professionals and actively recruit new members
 - Streamline our membership administration systems
 - Continue to provide a member benefits program through the National Building and Surveying Alliance

- 2. Host the National Housing Conference in 2009 in partnership with AHURI**
 - Join the NSW Department of Housing and AHURI as a partner in the 2007 National Housing Conference
 - Bid for the 2009 National Housing Conference to HMAAC

- 3. Host a Practice Conference every two years**
 - Promote and manage the inaugural Australasian Social Housing Community Renewal Conference
 - Promote and manage the second Australasian Asset Management Conference in November 2008

- 4. Host two local social housing conferences each year**
 - Promote and manage a local housing conference: in New Zealand and South Australia in 2006; Tasmania and Queensland in 2007; Western Australia and Victoria in 2008; New South Wales and the Northern Territory in 2009.

- 5. Maintain the Institute's Branch Committees as a mechanism for members to network with each other**
 - Facilitate the election of Branch Committees
 - Provide limited financial support to Branch Committees for local events
 - Assist Branch Committees implement local action plans

- 6. Operate the Institute as an entrepreneurial, customer focused, sustainable business**
 - Utilise member, customer and stakeholder evaluation results to guide planning and product and service development
 - Build strategic business relationships with other organisations to deliver member, customer and stakeholder value
 - Manage our business effectively and efficiently
 - Secure the level of corporate support and sponsorship detailed in our financial plan

The Strategies

- 7. Endorse professional practice standards for the social housing profession in Australasia by December 2006**
 - Consult with members and other key stakeholders about the draft standards
 - Publish the professional practice standards as approved by the Board of Directors
 - Amend the Institute's Code of Conduct as appropriate

- 8. Accredite Australasian social housing education and training courses**
 - Accredite the Swinburne University Graduate Diploma in Housing Management and Policy

- 9. Consult with members about the most suitable method of recognising attainment of the standards in 2007**
 - Prepare a consultation paper
 - Consult with members and other stakeholders
 - Implement recognition scheme

- 10. Deliver a program of seminars focusing on key policy issues**
 - Consult with members and other key stakeholders about topics
 - Organise one seminar in each jurisdiction annually
 - Facilitate distribution of outcomes to members

- 11. Assist Branch Committees to host policy discussion forums**
 - Organise forums
 - Facilitate distribution of outcomes to members

- 12. Comment on major strategic initiatives in jurisdictions as they arise**
 - Facilitate local member involvement in developing AHI comment
 - Prepare papers for endorsement by the Policy Committee
 - Make submissions as endorsed by the Policy Committee
 - Facilitate distribution of material to members

- 13. Deliver the professional practice seminar program**
 - Run one seminar each year in all jurisdictions on topics suggested by members and other stakeholders

- 14. Deliver the professional practice workshop program**
 - Run one workshop each year in all jurisdictions on topics emerging from the evaluation program

The Strategies

15. Publish three editions each year of the journal HousingWORKS

- Resource the Editorial Committee
- Resource the Commissioning Editor of HousingWORKS
- Layout and design
- Produce and distribute

16. Publish ten editions each year of the E-Magazine Housing People

- Prepare articles
- Layout and design
- Distribute

17. Refresh the Jobs On-Line service

- Incorporate into the website
- Promote the service to employer organisations
- Promote the service to members and other social housing professionals

Past and present performance

The Institute outlined its business case for funding from housing authorities for two years in early 2004. The table below summarises performance of the key deliverables in that business case, as modified at the request of the members of HMAc. For more information see The Year in Review at Appendix 1.

Deliverable	Due Date	Result
Membership Targets 485 635	6/2005 6/2006	480 533 at 31/12/05
Partnership Group	9/2004	The group assisted with the first review of the AHI
Practitioner Forums Executive Practitioners	12/2004	Held 11/2004 in Melbourne Members requested a second meeting in 4/2005 with a lower level of AHI input. This meeting was less successful.
Senior Practitioners	3/2005	This event was replaced by a meeting of the Training Network held in Melbourne 11/2004
Practice Conference	6/2005	Asset Management Conference held 7 and 8 February 2006
Professional Development Seminars <i>(Revised downwards from 21 to 15 as per HMAc advice)</i>		
15 Seminars	6/2005	14 delivered plus 4 free events 8 seminars delivered to 12/2005
15 Seminars	6/2006	plus 3 free events 9 anti social behaviour workshops planned to 6/2006

Deliverable	Due Date	Result
Short Course Training (Revised downwards from 21 workshops to 1 on HMAAC's advice)		
1 workshop 1 workshop	6/2005 6/2006	Not delivered 5 Mental Health First Aid Workshops planned to 6/2006
Publications		
HousingWORKS	11/2004 5/2005 11/2005 5/2006	Published Published Published (Joint edition with Parity) In production
EMagazine	15 editions in two years	Housing People launched in March 2005 and produced bi-monthly to 12/2005
Website	Ongoing	
Establish new branches in: Western Australia Northern Territory ACT	4/2005 4/2006 4/2007	9/2004
Practice Resource Centre	11/2005	Not funded
Professional Recognition Position Paper	5/2005	Standards framework developed and consulting members and other stakeholders 3/2006 Professional Excellence Awards presented 11/2004 and 2/2006

Financials

Source and application of funds

The table below shows how the AHI will expend funds to deliver its products and services. The table also notes the income derived from normal business. This shows that the organisation requires financial support from Corporate Supporters and Sponsors to meet costs.

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Income			
Membership Related	\$63,600	\$72,000	\$81,600
Interest, returns	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
Journal Subscribers	\$3,675	\$4,025	\$4,375
Events	\$249,498	\$304,966	\$320,925
Corporate Support, Sponsorship	\$265,500	\$264,498	\$260,597
	\$584,773	\$647,989	\$669,997
GST Collected	\$51,440	\$57,600	\$59,510
	\$533,333	\$590,388	\$610,487
Expenditure			
Salaries & Staff related	\$274,040	\$300,592	\$308,106
Contractors	\$20,000	\$28,750	\$29,000
Office/Admin Related Expenses	\$25,050	\$25,676	\$26,318
Corporate Costs - insurances etc	\$19,700	\$9,900	\$9,900
Printing, postage, freight	\$62,848	\$67,884	\$68,895
Communications	\$10,950	\$11,149	\$11,352
Teleconferences	\$10,250	\$10,506	\$10,769
Venue Costs, catering etc	\$70,250	\$90,738	\$83,311
Travel & Accommodation	\$52,225	\$55,068	\$56,445
Other...	\$13,000	\$11,200	\$12,405
	\$558,313	\$611,463	\$616,503
GST Paid	\$25,128	\$28,251	\$28,075
	\$533,185	\$583,212	\$588,428

Distribution by Program

The table below shows that the professional development products are to be run on a cost recovery basis with little room for profits to cross subsidize the other work of the organisation.

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
A. Professional Development Seminars			
Income	\$56,870	\$63,215	\$62,380
Expenditure	\$55,994	\$57,763	\$49,237
Balance	\$877	\$5,453	\$13,143
B. Practice Resource Centre			
Income	\$0	\$0	\$0
Expenditure	\$0	\$0	\$0
Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0
C. Branch/Practice Conferences			
Income	\$100,909	\$113,775	\$127,221
Expenditure	\$76,067	\$80,901	\$84,855
Balance	\$24,842	\$32,874	\$42,366
D. Communications			
Income	\$3,341	\$8,203	\$11,338
Expenditure	\$68,284	\$69,307	\$70,355
Balance	(\$64,943)	(\$61,104)	(\$59,017)
E. Branch Support			
Income	\$0	\$0	\$0
Expenditure	\$48,976	\$50,201	\$51,456
Balance	(\$48,976)	(\$50,201)	(\$51,456)
F. Core Operations			
Income	\$60,553	\$67,727	\$76,455
Expenditure	\$213,404	\$243,949	\$249,652
Balance	(\$152,851)	(\$176,222)	(\$173,197)
G. Practice Workshops			
Income	\$70,296	\$101,559	\$103,547
Expenditure	\$70,460	\$88,292	\$90,073
Balance	(\$164)	\$13,267	\$13,475
H. Corporate Support/Sponsorships			
Income	\$241,364	\$235,909	\$229,545
Expenditure	\$0	\$0	\$0
Balance	\$241,364	\$235,909	\$229,545
	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
TOTAL INCOME	\$533,333	\$590,388	\$610,487
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	\$533,185	\$590,412	\$595,628
SHORTFALL	\$148	(\$24)	\$14,859

Appendix 1: The Year in Review

Appendix 2: Risk Management

Risk	Description	Risk Mitigation Strategy
Unable to recruit staff with required skill sets	Moderate likelihood of risk occurring but would have high potential for impact on deliverables, budget and timeframe	Use contractors to fill gaps
Failure to achieve membership targets	High likelihood of risk occurring, but would have a moderate impact on financials as the average membership fee is low.	Continue targeted member recruitment campaigns
Reduced revenue due to lower than anticipated take up of products and services	Moderate likelihood of risk occurring and would have a high impact on cashflow and budget outcomes	Vigorous marketing of professional development program
Instability in the Board	Low likelihood of risk occurring but would have high potential for impact on deliverables, budget, timeframe and scope	Directors trained in their corporate governance role

Appendix 3: The Board of Directors

President Malcolm Downie	From 10/2005	General Manager South Australian Housing Trust
Rural Representative Pauline McKenzie	From 11/2002	General Manager Housing Services (North) NSW Department of Housing
Community Housing Representative Rhonda Phillips	From 11/2004	Academic and Board member
Volunteer Representative Garry Mallard	From 11/2004	Tenant Support Network
Indigenous Housing Representative Garry Gardiner	From 11/2004	Policy Officer Yilli Housing Darwin
New Zealand Garry Williams	From 10/2005	Housing Minister's Office New Zealand Government
Queensland Nicole Randall	From 10/2005	Policy Officer Department of Housing Queensland
New South Wales Lynden Esdaile	From 10/2005	Executive Chairperson Housing Appeals Committee NSW
Victoria Linda Tolson	From 10/2005	Training Manager Office of Housing Victoria
Tasmania Michelle Downie	From 11/2003	Area Manager Housing Tasmania
South Australia Josephine Cray	From 11/2003	Training and Development Manager Department of Families South Australia
Western Australia Shane Edmonds	From 11/2004	Department of Housing and Works

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